

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCE WILLIAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 BRONZE MEDAL VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every year, the Prince William County Chamber of Commerce recognizes individuals who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to public safety. These outstanding men and women have played an important role in building a better community. This hard work and determination has earned several citizens of Prince William County the highest honor bestowed upon county public safety officials—The Bronze Medal Valor Award.

The Bronze Medal is awarded to emergency service officers who demonstrate extraordinary judgment, ingenuity, or performance of their duties during an emergency. This may also include the saving of a life threatened by physical or medical reasons.

It is with great honor that I recognize Police Officer Second Class H. Booth III of the Prince William County Police Department, Firefighter Christine Connally of the OWL Volunteer Fire Department, and Firefighter Lawrence Kearnes of the Dale City Volunteer Fire Department as the recipients of the 2003 Bronze Medal Valor Award. The service they provide to the community is tremendous and is deserving of such acclaim.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve Prince William County. The events of September 11th served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us every day. Their constant efforts on behalf of Prince William County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law, and order throughout our neighborhoods; and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating these outstanding individuals.

CONCERNING U.S. AND ALLIED ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL KILLED, WOUNDED, OR TAKEN CAPTIVE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on March 26, 2003, I introduced a Resolution honoring U.S. and allied troops who have been killed in action. My resolution also honors those who are wounded, missing, or being held as prisoners of war.

Our men and women in uniform consistently reflect great honor upon this nation, whether

they are engaged in humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping, or war. Throughout our history, we have expected the very best from them. We expect them to be valiant, selfless, courageous, dependable, and dedicated, and they never disappoint us. It is a privilege and an honor to have them represent our nation, whether providing humanitarian assistance, conducting peacekeeping operations, or engaged in war.

Because of the very high regard in which we hold members of the armed services, it is especially disturbing to us when one of these fine young men or women is killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. By any measure, their contributions, in terms of human sacrifice, are immense. As a nation we share the sense of loss and fear and worry that their families are experiencing.

It is difficult to find words of comfort for their families—offering our deepest sympathy doesn't begin to express the anguish we experience when we see pictures of American and allied soldiers killed, wounded, or held captive, or when we learn that some are missing in action. These are truly images that bind us together in our thoughts and prayers.

We must never forget that the peace and prosperity that we enjoy are founded on the ultimate sacrifices made by those who have lost their lives in war throughout our nation's history. They have earned our gratitude and respect.

I encourage my colleagues and the citizens of this nation, to remember these inspiring men and women who have distinguished themselves with their gallantry and courage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 27, 2003, despite all my efforts, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 91, on H. Con. Res. 118, Concerning the Treatment of Members of the Armed Forces Held as Prisoner of War by Iraqi Authorities, I would have voted as follows: rollcall vote No. 91—"aye."

As the United States Armed Forces and its international allies continue to liberate the oppressed Iraqi people from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein, we pause today to recognize their bravery and professionalism. In addition, Congress extends heartfelt sympathies to the families of servicemembers who have been injured, killed, or taken prisoner in Iraq.

For more than 50 years, the Third Geneva Convention has prescribed guidelines for the proper and humane treatment of prisoners of war. Sadly, Iraq—which has agreed to abide by the Third Geneva Convention—views these international standards with the same callousness and disregard for human life that Saddam Hussein's murderous regime has dem-

onstrated for decades. Iraqi troops unwilling to die for a corrupt, diabolical regime can be comforted by the fact that American and coalition forces will treat prisoners of war humanely, supplying them with food, shelter, and medical assistance—in other words, treating them in full compliance with the Third Geneva Convention.

Iraqi television recently has broadcast, in direct violation of the Third Geneva Convention, footage of American Prisoners of War. I join my colleagues in thanking America's brave men and women serving their country on the front lines. I also unequivocally condemn Iraq's mistreatment of prisoners of war and remind the Iraqi regime that, if it chooses to ignore America's demand to abide by its commitment to the Third Geneva Convention, then these war criminals will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

JOHN KEBLES HONORED BY PENNSYLVANIA CREDIT UNION LEAGUE

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House of Representatives to the long record of service to the community of a constituent of mine, my good friend John Kebles. John is president and chief executive officer of Choice One Federal Credit Union in Wilkes-Barre and outgoing chairman of the board of the Pennsylvania Credit Union League for 2001–2002. The league will thank and honor him for his service at its annual convention, to be held from April 24 to 26, 2003.

I grew to know John well in 1998 during the fight to pass the Credit Union Membership Access Act, better known to many as H.R. 1151. The enactment of this law showed the power of average citizens to influence Congress, and, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that John is an excellent example of those dedicated souls who exercised their Constitutionally guaranteed right to petition their government.

As chairman of the state credit union league, he has successfully urged credit union members to become more involved in their government, setting an example for other credit union members around the nation. Another example of the league's many accomplishments under his leadership is the enactment of a state credit union parity bill last year to expand opportunities for state-chartered credit unions. Also during his tenure, the league has launched CU BizSource, a new product and service to offer business loans to members. This is a fine example of the democratic—"little D"—access to capital that credit unions are intended to provide.

In the Wilkes-Barre area, John has been a leader in several community-minded initiatives, including spearheading the effort by several

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

credit unions to build a Habitat for Humanity house in Ashley and seeking a community charter, which has made Choice One better able to serve more lower-income people. I am proud to claim him as a constituent and to call him a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to call to the attention of the House of Representatives the honor being accorded to John Kebles by the Pennsylvania Credit Union League, and I wish him and his family all the best.

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCE WILLIAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 LIFESAVING VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every year, the Prince William County Chamber of Commerce recognizes individuals who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to public safety. These outstanding men and women have played an important role in building a better community. This hard work and determination has earned several citizens of Prince William County the highest honor bestowed upon county public safety officials—The Lifesaving Valor Award.

The Lifesaving Award is awarded to public safety officials in recognition of acts taken in a life-threatening situation in which an individual's life is in risk, either medically or physically. It is with great honor that I enter into the record the names of the 2003 Lifesaving Award recipients. OWL Volunteer Fire Department: Lt. James Dart; Prince William County Police Department: MPO W.A. Lawrence; MPO G.W. Motley; MPO K.A. Muehlauser; Arlington County Sheriff's Department: Deputy J. O'Keefe; USMC: Sergeant Daniel P. O'Mahoney. The service they provide to the community is tremendous and is deserving of such acclaim.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve Prince William County. The events of September 11th served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us every day. Their constant efforts on behalf of Prince William County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law, and order throughout our neighborhoods; and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating these outstanding individuals.

SECURING BLESSINGS OF PROVIDENCE FOR PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND OUR ARMED FORCES

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 153 and ask my colleagues to join me. This resolution declares the sense

of Congress that the President of the United States should designate a national day of prayer, fasting and humility. At a time when many of our young men and women are engaged in a global war on terrorism and a campaign to disarm the Iraqi regime, it is entirely appropriate we should humble ourselves before Almighty God.

Throughout American history, both the Congress and the President have called on the American people to acknowledge the Providence of God and to seek his divine wisdom. We have witnessed the benefits of national prayer and fasting in times past, and we are today asking the President to once again proclaim such a day. While the challenges we face in the 21st Century are new, we know the root causes of these difficulties are much the same as they have always been.

It is with the hope that good will ultimately triumph that we are asking for all people to collectively acknowledge God and seek guidance, strength and resolve through prayer and fasting.

Many families all across this great nation are praying for a quick resolve to the conflict in Iraq. It is fitting that we as a nation join with them in solidarity during this time of war and chaos.

As we hear new reports of those killed or missing in action, our hearts go out to the children and families of these brave men and women fighting overseas. Pfc. Patrick Miller, a constituent of mine, is among those Americans being held captive in Iraq. We are once again realizing the high cost of war and what it means to defend liberty.

In recent years I think most Americans have been made more aware of just how fragile peace can be, both at home and abroad. America and the world have witnessed the destruction of innocent life and the violation of universal human rights by brutal men. In a time when the President and other leaders are deciding how to respond to these situations, it is vitally important we recognize a higher power than ourselves.

Our Founding Fathers understood the necessity of seeking guidance from God, and today we are no less in need of that same Divine Counsel.

During the Civil War Abraham Lincoln was asked if God was on his side. His reply was, "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on my side. My great concern is to be on God's side."

In the same spirit of humility Abraham Lincoln exhibited during one of our nation's darkest hours, we are asking the President to call for a national day of prayer, humility and fasting.

As we examine ourselves before God, we will surely be shown our own failings and will learn how we can do better in our actions. I am confident that as in times past, God will once again provide assistance to our country in our time of need.

In 1787 Benjamin Franklin said, "We need God as our friend not our enemy. We need him to be our ally not our adversary. We need to make sure that we keep God's concurring aid."

As Mr. Franklin wisely affirmed our need for God more than two centuries ago, once again we need to join together as a country in asking for the "aid" of the Almighty.

KEEPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SAFE ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this bill. It provides states with Federal funds to train caseworkers in child protective service systems, an initiative that the State of Florida desperately needs.

Florida's Department of Children and Families has an abysmal record of monitoring the children entrusted to its care, and I am hopeful that an infusion of Federal funds, aimed at increasing both training and oversight of social workers, will alleviate this disgrace.

I am sure you will recall the story of 5-year-old Rilya Wilson, the young Florida child whose whereabouts are still unknown. Eight months after her disappearance, her social worker was still filing reports indicating that she had routinely conducted home visits and that the child was safe and well cared for.

Regrettably, investigations into Florida's child welfare system revealed that this was not an isolated case. Last September, in response to public outcry over the Rilya Wilson incident, Governor Bush replaced the secretary of Florida's Department of Children and Families.

He also created a governor's task force in an attempt to locate an additional 393 children missing from Florida's child welfare system.

After a 15-week effort, the Governor described the results "a success" even though only one-fourth of the 393 missing children had been located, and the task force was disbanded.

I am hopeful that an infusion of Federal funds, specifically geared towards training caseworkers, will improve the child welfare system in the State of Florida and the rest of the Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 27, 2003, despite all my efforts, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present for rollcall vote No.'s 87, 88, and 90 I would have voted the following way:

Rollcall vote No. 87, Amendment offered by Rep. FEENEY of Florida—"aye"

Rollcall vote No. 88, Amendment offered by Rep. SMITH of Texas—"aye"

Rollcall vote No. 90—"aye"

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCE WILLIAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 GOLD MEDAL VALOR AWARD RECIPIENT

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every year, the Prince William County Chamber recognizes individuals who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to

public safety. These outstanding men and women have played an important role in building a better community. This hard work and determination has earned several citizens of Prince William County the highest honor bestowed upon county public safety officials—The Gold Medal Valor Award.

The Gold Medal is the highest award for bravery and heroism. It is awarded to emergency service officers who have knowingly placed themselves in peril of death or extreme harm while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

It is with great honor that I recognize Firefighter Carrie Wilson of the Stonewall Jackson Volunteer Fire Department as a recipient of the Gold Medal Valor Award. Firefighter Wilson helped to avert possible deaths and injuries at an apartment fire by acting quickly and professionally. A prime example of her bravery was when she came to the aid of an engine officer after a balcony railing collapsed, despite the burning debris pouring onto the crew. Firefighter Wilson also took part in the Red Cross Emergency Response Team, assisting the twenty-four displaced families find accommodations. The Chamber has made an excellent decision in awarding Carrie Wilson this prestigious honor.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating this extraordinary citizen. In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve Prince William County. The events of September 11th served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us every day. Their constant efforts on behalf of Prince William County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law and order throughout our neighborhoods, and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise.

RECOGNIZING THE SOCIAL PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, AND SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 113, the Child Abuse and Neglect Bill of 2003. This bill will support efforts to enhance public awareness of child abuse and neglect.

In the state of Michigan, where I am proud to represent the 4th District, the number of child abuse and neglect related fatalities have been steadily increasing since 1998. Again, in my state, there are 2.4 identified victims of child abuse per 1,000 Michigan residents. I emphasize, that statistic encapsulates identified victims only. I implore my fellow members of the House to think of the number of unreported cases. This sad fact proves that the American public is not fully aware of the problem presented by child neglect and abuse. Thus, a challenge lies before us. This is a challenge of committing every possible effort towards the elimination of child neglect and abuse.

Behind every number is a person, a child. Some of these children die because of child

neglect and abuse. Some of them simply never experience the love of a parent. Either situation is abominable and the American people need to be made aware of it.

The mission of this bill is to break the cycle of violence, especially with emphasis on the important first step of awareness. This bill intends to achieve a maximum awareness of child abuse and neglect.

Mr. Speaker, this is a worthy bill and an important step in the right direction. As a long time advocate for the oppressed children of our nation, I urge support for this bill. I yield back the balance of my time.

THE DEMOCRACY DAY ACT OF 2003

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Democracy Day Act of 2003," legislation that would provide a day off of work so that more of our citizens can vote. I am joined by Representatives CUMMINGS, RODRIGUEZ, WU, RANGEL, MCGOVERN, FROST, KILPATRICK, WOOLSEY, KAPTUR, CARSON (IN), and DAVIS (IL).

The United States is the greatest democratic republic in the history of civilization, and at the foundation of our democracy is the right to vote. This right was not simply handed to Americans; rather, it was hard won by many of our Nation's citizens. Today, active citizenship demands that Americans cast a vote to have their "say" in the political arena.

Despite this privilege, voter turnout has been declining since the 1960s in both Presidential and mid-term elections. Less than half of the voting age population (49.5 percent) voted in the 1996 Presidential election, and only 51.2 percent voted in the 2000 presidential election. The 1998 midterm elections saw the lowest voter turnout since 1942 at 36.1 percent. Of the 163 democracies worldwide, the United States ranks 139th in voter participation.

Among several factors causing this decline in voter turnout is the fact that many people do not have time to vote on election day. In fact, according to a recent Census Bureau study, nearly 25 percent of eligible voters cited time constraints or busy work or school schedules as the primary reason for failing to vote in the 2000 Presidential election.

The Democracy Day Act of 2003 addresses this problem by providing many hardworking Americans with the necessary time off from work so they can vote. In addition, the bill would have the added benefit of increasing the number of available election day judges, poll workers and suitable polling places. It would also serve to decrease long lines and the overcrowding that occurs during peak times on election day, as well as reinforcing the notion that voting is an important civic duty.

The movement to ensure that citizens have time to exercise their democratic right to vote has gained significant momentum in various states. According to the Federal Election Commission, 12 states designate election day as a state holiday, some of which close the schools in addition to excusing employees from work. In addition, 20 states provide state employees

time off to vote, and in 26 states, private sector employees may take time off to vote. It is time the Federal Government acts to solidify and coordinate this very important movement.

The right to vote is at the foundation of our democracy, and we must do everything we can to ensure that every eligible American has equal access to the polling booths. I am hopeful that Congress can move quickly to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

APPLAUDING ELSIE P. BROWN FOR HER COMMITMENT TO INCREASED HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS OF GEORGIA

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, Elsie P. Brown has had a remarkable career in public health and primary health care that spans over thirty years. Few Georgians have worked as diligently for so long to address the need for providing quality health care access to Georgia's underserved populations.

Elsie is soon retiring from her current role as the Director of Government Affairs and Membership Services, for the Georgia Association For Primary Health Care, Inc. During Elsie's tenure, she has provided critical leadership and unwavering commitment in bringing to the forefront at the state and national levels the need to improve access to primary care. While Elsie can give you the facts, it has been her ability to work with everyone, from patients to Governors, from physicians to Congressmen that has made her a unique force in this movement. It is largely through her single-minded effort that the state of Georgia has made its very first state appropriation for Federally Qualified Health Centers in Georgia from its portion of the tobacco settlement.

There is no one who has served in Congress from Georgia over the last thirty years who has not had Elsie and her "troops" make the case increased emphasis on access to care for everyone with vigor and persistence. Yet, Elsie has always seemed like a friend rather than an advocate. She understands the workings of government as well as she understands the delivery of primary care. Her work has contributed directly to the creation of Community Health Centers in 37 Georgia counties. This has resulted in access for over 100,000 quality primary care visits for the poor and underserved.

Elsie's retirement will leave a void in the Health center community, but the legacy she leaves as a result of her thirty year commitment to making Georgia a better and healthier state will stand as an example to all who follow her.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERNIE FLETCHER

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 27, 2003, despite all my efforts, I was

unavoidably detained. Had I been present for rollcall vote No. 89, on final passage of H.R. 1104, The Child Abduction Prevention Act, I would have voted as follows: rollcall vote No. 89—"aye."

Protecting our children is a top priority of this Congress. Child abduction and exploitation cannot and should not be tolerated. The Child Abduction Prevention Act not only creates new methods for finding and recovering abducted children, but it also takes steps to prevent them from happening in the first place.

To help recover abducted children, it establishes a national AMBER Alert communications network and doubles the annual grant to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to \$20 million through 2005.

To get tough on perpetrators and bring justice to sexual predators, it eliminates the statute of limitations for child abductions and sex crimes, denies pretrial release for child rapists or child abductors, requires a mandatory life sentence for twice-convicted child sex-offenders and a minimum 20-year prison sentence for the kidnapping of a person under 18 by a nonfamily member. It also punishes persons who travel to foreign countries to engage in illicit sexual relations with minors and criminalizes the actions of sex tour operators.

To provide law enforcement officers the tools they need, it authorizes COPS funding for a Sex Offender Apprehension Program, so local law enforcement may track sex offenders that violate the terms of their release.

I fully support this strong measure, "The Child Abduction Prevention Act," that will help protect America's children.

CHILD ABDUCTION PREVENTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 27, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1104) to prevent child abduction, and for other purposes:

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1104, legislation that would improve our capacity to recover missing children with implementation of a national AMBER Alert program.

The safe recovery of 15-year-old Elizabeth Smart in Utah recently brought this important issue to national attention. I am well aware of how important AMBER Alert systems can be to helping bring abducted children home safely, which is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 412, the National AMBER Alert Network Act included in this bill, and supported the legislation introduced by Representatives MARTIN FROST and JENNIFER DUNN in the 107th Congress.

As Johnson County District Attorney for 12 years, I have seen child abduction cases that ended with the most horrible result—the death of a child. I helped bring AMBER Alert to Kansas City in 1999 and the system so far has contributed to the safe return of a 16-month-

old child and a 4-year-old child. As a result, the state of Kansas implemented a statewide AMBER Alert program in October of 2002. I have since actively worked to bring the AMBER system nationwide.

Earlier this month, I hosted a news conference in Kansas City, Missouri, with my colleague Representative KAREN MCCARTHY, to raise awareness about AMBER procedures and the need for a national program. We joined with local police to publicize AMBER Alert and expressed our support for immediate passage of this bill. Cases like Elizabeth Smart demonstrate the urgency for recovering missing children, and although the Smart family was incredibly lucky, many others are not.

Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed that we have not seen the AMBER Alert legislation come to the floor as a stand alone bill, as I called for many months ago. I believe that saving children should be above partisan politics and that Congress should be able to unite in favor of increasing measures to help our kids. While I rise in support of H.R. 1104, I do want to express my dissatisfaction that we could not follow the model of our Senate counterparts who passed AMBER Alert without additional provisions that likely will delay enactment.

I hope that you will join with me to pass H.R. 1104, however, to improve the safety of our children.

HONORING PAUL H. BETANCOURT

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paul H. Betancourt on the occasion of the Annual Banquet of the Fresno County Farm Bureau on April 4, 2003. A diversified row crop farmer, Paul completed his two-year term as Fresno County Farm Bureau president in 2002.

Born on the East Coast, Paul was raised in San Diego, California, and became a farmer after marrying into a farming family. Mr. Betancourt earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in religious studies from Westmont College, and a second degree in agriculture business from California State University, Fresno. He is a graduate of Class XXV of the California Agriculture Leadership Program.

The Fresno County Farm Bureau represents over 6,000 members, which includes over 4,500 farmers and ranchers, on trade, land use, water, labor, and all agricultural related issues. Mr. Betancourt has held several positions within Farm Bureau, including director-at-large, secretary-treasurer, and second and first vice presidents. Through his Farm Bureau activities, Paul served on the board of directors of the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, and represented the Farm Bureau at many industry and community forums and events.

Paul currently serves on the Kerman Unified School Board of Trustees and is involved in the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative. In addition, he farms 765 acres of cotton and almonds in the Kerman and Cantua Creek

areas of Fresno County. Besides farming, Mr. Betancourt is a noted columnist for a local business publication and also enjoys teaching Sunday School class at Kerman Covenant. Paul and his wife, Sheryl, have two children, Heidi and Jonathan, and live near Kerman, California.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paul H. Betancourt for his dedication and commitment to the Fresno County Farm Bureau and to the broader California agriculture community. I invite my colleagues to join me in commending Paul for his service and hard work and in wishing him many years of continued success.

THE PRINCE WILLIAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 MERIT VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, every year, the Prince William Chamber of Commerce recognizes individuals who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to public safety. These outstanding men and women have played an important role in building a better community. This hard work and determination has earned several citizens of Prince William County the highest honor bestowed upon county public safety officials—The Merit Valor Award.

The Merit Award recognizes public service officials for acts involving personal risk. The award may also be presented to those who demonstrate judgment, zeal, or ingenuity above what is non-nally expected in the performance of duty.

It is with great honor that I enter into the record the names of the 2003 Merit Award recipients. Prince William County Police Department: Police Officer Second Class R.A. Arce; Police Officer Second Class R.W. Minnick; Police Officer Second Class B.K. Oxendine; Sr. First Sergeant J.B. Wheeler; Prince William County Department of Fire & Rescue: Technician II Michelle Butler; Technician I Scott Calder; Technician II Stephen Horvath; Technician I Landon Timbers, Jr.; Virginia State Police: Trooper Darrel D. Estess; Senior Trooper Mark C. Wilkinson; USMC: Corporal Amber V. Kephart; Prince William County Office of the Sheriff: Deputy Sheriff Heath Stearns; OWL Volunteer Fire Department: EMT Robert W. Warner. The service they provide to the community is tremendous and is deserving of such acclaim.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve Prince William County. The events of September 11th, served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us every day. Their constant efforts on behalf of Prince William County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law, and order throughout our neighborhoods; and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating these outstanding individuals.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES PARTICIPATING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

SPEECH OF

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 20, 2003

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, based on the misleading and erroneous statement made by the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. HOYER, I feel compelled to correct the record. In an effort to suggest inconsistencies in my historical support and commendation of the troops, Mr. HOYER stated that on December 13, 1995, I voted against a resolution regarding Armed Forces deployment to Bosnia that resolved, "That the House of Representatives unequivocally supports the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who are carrying out their mission in support of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina with professional excellence, dedicated patriotism, and exemplary bravery." However, a simple examination of the record tells a different story.

What the gentleman from Maryland failed to note, is that on December 13, 1995, the House considered two competing resolutions on the deployment of the United States Armed Forces to Bosnia—House Resolution 302 sponsored by Mr. BUYER and House Resolution 306 sponsored by Mr. Hamilton. If the Hamilton resolution had consisted of only the resolved clause, which my colleague quoted, I would have supported it. However, H. Res. 306 was compiled mostly of whereas clauses that justified the deployment of our Armed Forces to the former Yugoslavia. Had my colleague thoroughly researched this, he might have noticed that, also on December 13, 1995, I opposed this deployment by voting for Mr. Dornan's bill, H.R. 2770, which would have prohibited federal funds from being used for peacekeeping operations or any implementation force in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I, instead, voted for the Buyer resolution, which expressed dissatisfaction with the President's policy of deployment and his disregard of the action taken by the House on two separate occasions to disallow the use of United States Armed Forces for these purposes. Nonetheless, this resolution also declared that the House of Representatives, "... is confident that the members of the United States Armed Forces, in whom it has the greatest pride and admiration, will perform their responsibilities with professional excellence, dedicated patriotism, and exemplary courage. . . ."

Incidentally, the Buyer resolution passed the House by a vote of 287 to 141, with one voting present. The resolution Mr. HOYER criticized me for voting against, the Hamilton resolution, failed by a vote of 190 to 237, also with one voting present.

It is truly unfortunate that Mr. HOYER made such a misleading statement and questioned my unfailing dedication to the young men and women of our Armed Forces.

HONORING SENATOR CHARLES POOCHIGIAN

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an extraordinary Californian, whom I have the privilege of Representing in Congress, California State Senator Charles S. Poochigian. I am proud to have the opportunity to spend a few minutes of my time in the House to share with the people of the United States how wonderful Chuck is and what a great asset he is to the people he serves.

Chuck Poochigian is an outstanding public servant but more importantly, he is a wonderful husband, father and member of his community. Anywhere you go in Chuck's hometown, you will find adoring friends, supporters and, of course, the many members of his extended family. He and his wife, Debbie, have worked to achieve a balanced life of faith, family and community service and are blessed with three outstanding children, Mark, Kirk and Laura.

Chuck has been a member of the California State Senate for four years and had previously served in the California State Assembly. In addition, he spent time in the Administration's of two California Governors. However, the more important measure of his outstanding service can be found in his commitment to the people he represents and to his proud heritage as an Armenian American.

Chuck has managed to achieve the meritorious recognition of many prominent organizations, ranging from the California State Sheriff's Association to the California State Student's Association. Throughout his career in public service, Chuck Poochigian has tempered his political ambition with a strong belief in family, faith and an understanding of the founding principals of our democracy. Demonstrating the high esteem to which he is held, The California Journal commended Chuck for his integrity, intelligence and problem solving abilities rating him as "Rookie of the Year" during his freshman term in office. Mr. Speaker, these accolades could not have been bestowed on a more worthy public servant.

It is also fitting at this time to express how important Chuck has been to the cause of advocating the special concerns of the Armenian Community in the California Legislature and I wish to publicly commend him on his pending receipt of the Armenian National Committee of Central California's Man of the Year Award, which is to be presented on April 12th in Fresno, California.

INTRODUCING THE VOTER OUTREACH AND TURNOUT EXPANSION ACT OF 2003

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Voter Outreach and Turnout Expansion Act of 2003. The VOTE Act encompasses the best state voting practices in the country and is a progressive ap-

proach toward further reforming the way we run our elections.

Last year, in passing the Help America Vote Act, Congress made the historic statement that the federal government does in fact play a role in establishing minimum standards in federal elections. Today, as the fight to fund the Help America Vote Act continues in the 108th Congress, it is also appropriate for Congress to consider legislation that expands voting opportunities for all Americans far beyond those of current law.

Many states across the country have already taken steps to expand accessibility to the polls and encourage its citizens to vote. Now, riding the coattails of the Help America Vote Act, Congress must do the same.

To accomplish this important task, Mr. Speaker, the VOTE Act takes aim at combating voter apathy through same day voter registration, early voting, no excuse absentee voting, improved registration by mail procedures, the establishment of an Election Day holiday, and guaranteed leave on election day to allow employees to vote. Specifically, the legislation does the following:

The VOTE Act requires states to establish same-day voter registration procedures. Under the legislation, voters who have not previously registered to vote will be permitted to register on election day at the appropriate polling location and vote in that election. To address concerns over voter fraud that in the past so many of my colleagues have suggested occurs, voters are required to present proof of residence and written confirmation pursuant to the Help America Vote Act. Title I of the bill is linked to the enforcement provisions of the Help America Vote Act to ensure states' compliance.

Further, the VOTE Act requires local elections supervisors to establish early voting polling locations within the jurisdiction where registered voters will be able to vote prior to election day. Early voting must commence no less than 22 days, or three weeks, prior to election day and shall be made available to voters during normal business hours each weekday. Additionally, elections supervisors must make early voting available to voters on no less than two weekend days during the three weeks.

The bill also prohibits states and local supervisors from requiring voters to provide a reason for voting absentee. All too often, voters become discouraged from voting absentee, or just voting at all, because they are required to provide a reason. This is just plain wrong. Voting should not be a test where excuses are not permitted. On the contrary, absentee voting should be an option—and an easy one to take advantage of at that.

The VOTE Act also amends the Help America Vote Act to require that election supervisors provide voters with adequate time and opportunity to complete their mail-in voter registration form. In instances where the state registration deadline has already passed, supervisors are required to inform the voter of same-day voter registration opportunities that exist.

Further, my legislation requires that federal employees be given the day off on Election Day and encourages states to make Election Day a legal holiday and provide paid leave for state government employees.

Finally, the VOTE Act requires private companies with 25 or more employees to allow their staff to take up to 2 hours of paid or unpaid leave time to vote. Employees who live

more than 25 miles away from their workplace are allowed to take up to three hours of leave. Enforcement of these provisions is tied into the Family Medical Leave Act. By and large, Americans who do not vote cite employment as the top reason for not voting. The VOTE Act allows them to work and vote without the fear of losing their jobs in the process.

My legislation, Mr. Speaker, is not the silver bullet to improving our election system. However, it draws upon the best practices in the country in an effort to maximize voter turnout and participation in the democratic process. Congress cannot and will not drive up participation in elections without the progressive minded approach that is embedded in the VOTE Act.

If we do not make it easier for people to vote, then they just won't. Congress must provide voters with more opportunities to vote. If it does not, then national turnout percentages will rarely exceed 50 percent, and we will never be able to call ourselves a true democracy.

I urge my colleagues to support the VOTE Act and call on the Leadership to bring it to the floor for its immediate consideration.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ALBANY STATE!

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate one of our country's truly great institutions of higher learning, Albany State University—which this year is celebrating its 100th birthday.

Albany State, located in Albany, Georgia in the heart of our state's Second Congressional District, opened its doors in 1903 as a privately funded institution as the Albany Bible and Manual Training Institute, serving young African American men and women in an area where few educational opportunities were then available.

Today, the university, now a part of the state system, serves an increasingly diverse student body while continuing to fulfill its historic mission in reaching out to our region's underserved populations.

Albany State's first job is to provide an excellent education to its students, offering a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degrees and a variety of non-degree educational programs.

But Albany State also does much more.

This highly committed, creative, vibrant educational complex has made, and is making, a major contribution to the growth of the whole community and region through its research, outreach and public service activities.

The history of Albany State is one of steady growth and success.

In the early years, the school provided much needed teacher and vocational training. In 1917, the school became a two-year state-supported college with a new name, the Georgia Normal and Agricultural College, with programs in teaching and agriculture. In 1943, the growing institution again acquired a new name, Albany State College. Over the ensuing years, Albany State added more and more undergraduate and eventually graduate degrees, and university status was granted in 1996.

Albany State has been blessed with outstanding leadership. Dr. Joseph Winthrop Holley was the first President, and he served in that capacity for 40 years. He was succeeded by Dr. Aaron Brown; Dr. William H. Dennis; Dr. Thomas Miller Jenkins; Dr. Charles L. Hayes, and Dr. Billy C. Black. Albany State's current president is among the country's leading educational figures, Dr. Portia Holmes Shields, whose sister is our own Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place in the Record part of Albany State's Centennial Resolution, which says:

Whereas, Albany State University's tradition of excellence has been the result of dedicated service by faculty, staff, students and community;

Whereas, Albany State University is a progressive institution fostering the growth and development of the region, state and nation through teaching, research, creative expression and public service;

Whereas, Albany State University embraces the concept of 'students first' as a core institutional value, promotes global learning, and is committed to educational excellence with special emphasis on the underserved while continuing to serve the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population;

Whereas, Albany State University celebrates throughout the year of our Lord two thousand and three the centennial theme, "A Glorious Past to Cherish, An Infinite Future to Fulfill";

Whereas, Albany State University is recognized for its unwavering commitment to graduating empowered leaders, building better communities and making the difference.

Now therefore be it *resolved* That April 4, 2003 is recognized as Albany State University Day in the City of Albany in recognition of the Centennial Founders Day celebration of Albany State University.

Happy Birthday, Albany State!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 87 on H.R. 1104, Feeney of Florida amendment, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the great issues of war and peace have rightfully dominated the news and the focus of our attention as a people and as a legislative body during the month of March. Nevertheless, other events must continue on.

March, of course, is Women's History Month. It is not designated Women's History Month because we may ignore the role and history of women for the other eleven months of the year. Quite the opposite. We have designated March as Women's History Month to highlight, for on-going consideration, the status, condition and progress of women.

The Congress established Women's History Week in 1981 and expanded it to Women's History Month in 1987. In that short period Women's History Month has become a time when men and women learn about the history of more than half of our population, much of which is not recorded in standard history books. The rediscovery of our "missing" history has been a beneficent thing for America.

As for the status of women, this year we note with satisfaction that women have made progress toward equality. At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about how far women need to go before they achieve what simple fairness and justice would demand: full equality.

Mr. Speaker, just a few numbers to highlight the current status of women:

The median earnings of women age 15 and older who worked full time, year around, after adjustment for inflation, increased 3.5 percent in 2001, the fifth consecutive increase. Women in this group earn \$0.76 for every dollar their male counterparts earn. This ratio represents an all-time high according to the census bureau.

The gap between men and women with college degrees has not closed completely, but the percentages are close: 25 percent of women age 25 and over now have a bachelor's degree or higher compared with 29 percent of men. For younger women, age 25 to 34, 33 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 29 percent of their male counterparts of the same age. Young women also have a higher high school completion rate than young men: 89 percent v. 85 percent.

The percentage of women who cast a ballot in the last Presidential election was 61 percent compared with 58 percent of men. Women have voted at higher rates than men in every Presidential election since 1984.

There are now 10 million single mothers up from 3 million in 1970. Overall about 26 percent of all parent-child situations consist of a single mother and her own children up from 12 percent in 1970.

Women are far more likely than men to live in poverty, especially seniors. According to the census bureau 12 percent of women age 65 and older lived in poverty compared with 7 percent of men.

Nearly 16 percent of men age 15 and older who worked full time in 2001 earned \$75,000 per year compared with 6 percent of women. About 20 percent of men earned \$50,000 to \$75,000 compared to 12 percent of women.

Mr. Speaker, there are especially troubling increases in the number of women who are in prison and there remain significant disparities between men and women in health care and other vital social indices.

Mr. Speaker, women may not have had their history fully recorded, but they have always assumed their full share and more in the building of our nation, in creating and protecting America's families, in developing art, culture and science, public policy, health care, education and any other field one can name. However, it has required constant struggle on the part of women.

Thus, women have always played an important part in shaping public opinion but it was not until 1916 that Jeanette Rankin of Montana became the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and not until 1992 that Carol Moseley Braun became the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

Anne Bradstreet became the first published American writer in 1650 and in 1993 Toni Morrison became the first African American woman to win the Nobel prize in literature.

Over the course of our history we have seen an unending string of "firsts." The first woman to receive her M.D. degree: Elizabeth Blackwell—1849. The first female professional chemist: Ellen Swallow Richards—1873. First American woman in Space: Sally Ride—1983. First woman U.S. Surgeon General; Antonia Novello—1990.

Mr. Speaker, the history of American women is an inexhaustible subject. No one can reduce it to a single sound byte or a single notion. One thing is clear: the march to equality is irresistible and unrelenting.

The Equal Rights Amendment was first drafted by Alice Paul in 1923. The message was simple and clear: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The Congress did not pass, and send to the states, the ERA until March 22, 1972. The states failed to ratify. But our responsibility as a people and as a legislative body remains. Women demand and deserve equality in every sphere of life, beginning with the law. It is high time for us to recognize and ratify that most just and basic demand.

CHATARD WINS INDIANA STATE BOYS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis, IN, on winning the Indiana State Boys Basketball Championship (Class 3A). Chatard's Trojans triumphed over Fort Wayne Elmhurst by a score of 78-44.

The Chatard Trojans won their first state basketball title ever on Saturday night to complete an outstanding season record of 22-2.

Congratulations to Coach Dan Archer and the Chatard Trojan players: John Loughery, Jamaal Wade, Dray Mason, Marques Presley, Ryan Baker, Mike Dury, Frank Halliburton, Greg Cage, Dan Cage, Tony Barnes, Jimmy Scheidler, and Jonas Coleman.

The Indiana State Boys Basketball Championship was played at Conseco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, IN.

The Trojans competitive spirit and remarkable sportsmanship contributed to an excellent season for the team. I applaud their skilled teamwork and hope next year's season will bring them another state final championship.

Again, an outstanding example of perfect teamwork.

Congratulations to the Trojans! Job well done. You've made us proud!

TRIBUTE TO MRS. ARLINE SCHWARTZMAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs.

Arline Schwartzman who is being honored by the Highland Park Conservative Temple and Center. I am proud to have Mrs. Schwartzman as one of my constituents and I commend her for the dedication and devotion she has exhibited to her community over the past four decades.

Mrs. Schwartzman's passion for humanitarian, civic, and philanthropic undertakings are a direct reflection of her character. Arline Schwartzman has been an active member of the Highland Park Temple for almost 40 years and her extraordinary record has been displayed as she has shared her time, talent, and expertise with tremendous commitment.

Born in Jersey City, Mrs. Schwartzman moved to Highland Park shortly after her marriage to her late husband, Mr. Henry Schwartzman. Ever since then she has been vibrantly active in the community. Upon joining Highland Park Temple, she and Henry became involved in temple events where she continues to be an energetic member of the community by participating in programs, classes, and activities.

Mrs. Schwartzman has also had an impact on communities outside of her Temple. Her strong commitment to the health care field is evident by her 50 years of volunteer service at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Presently she serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors and has been a member of the Board since 1965. In that time, she was instrumental in the Hospital's transformation from a small community hospital to one of the nation's leading academic health centers.

Mrs. Schwartzman is also a life member of Hadassah and Brandeis and an active member of the Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County. She is also a member of the temple's Board of Trustees, the Sisterhood Board, and is active on the Refurbishment Committee. Recently Arline presented the Temple with a beautiful Sefer Torah in memory of her husband.

Other honors that Mrs. Schwartzman has received in her tenure of community service include the Torch of Liberty Award of the Anti-Defamation League, the National Volunteer Award of the Center for Volunteer Action, the Testimonial of Appreciation of the American Hospital Association, and the Community Leader of Distinction Award of the Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Arline Schwartzman is still a resident of Highland Park, with her mother Beatrice. She has been blessed with a wonderful family: Paula and Larry Melz, Roberta and Jeffrey Kirsch, Terri and Richard Beck, and Shelia and Richard Weber. She is also proud of her 8 grandchildren: Stacy, Steven, Lauren, Daniel, Julie, Jerry, David and Michael.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring this extraordinary individual for her invaluable and enthusiastic commitment to her community.

BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 19, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 975) to amend title 11 of the United States Code, and for other purposes:

BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2003

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 975, a bill to modify our nation's bankruptcy system. I support holding individuals responsible for paying debts that they can reasonably afford. Our banks, credit unions and other responsible financial institutions should not have to foot the bill for individuals who take advantage of the system to avoid their debts. I support efforts to curb the overwhelming number of bankruptcies filed each year, which strain our responsible financial institutions and their ability to provide low-cost services to consumers. Unfortunately, I cannot support this very unbalanced legislation.

I have spoken with bankruptcy judges from Minnesota who share my concern that this bill will be particularly harmful to working families. The bill before us today will make it harder for custodial parents to collect child support. Further, it does nothing to hold credit card companies accountable for using risky business practices to extend thousands of dollars of credit to those individuals already deep in debt. Despite significant pressure from Democratic members to implement meaningful disclosure requirements, this bill does not go nearly far enough in requiring that credit card companies provide information that consumers need to practice good financial planning.

Supporters of this legislation claim that it puts children first by making child support claims the number one priority when assets are distributed in bankruptcy cases. But bankruptcy judges have told me that by forcing debtors to pay off more of their credit card debt after bankruptcy, this bill will directly impair their ability to make child support payments. It is wrong to make custodial parents and children who are owed support compete with the lawyers of credit card companies with deep pockets for the debtor's limited resources.

This bill also fails to hold credit card companies accountable for extending thousands of dollars in credit to college students using questionable marketing tactics. College students and their parents tell me that students find almost unlimited credit readily available. Credit card companies are setting up shop on campus, offering easy credit with free gifts such as T-shirts, flashlights, pens or water jugs. Students are offered "teaser" interest rates of 5 to 7 percent, while failing to realize that their rates can later hit 20 percent. As a result, 10 percent of all college students owe \$7,000 or more to credit card companies. Because financial aid has failed to keep pace with inflation, these students also owe an average of \$17,000 to the federal government upon graduation. We must do more to help our students.

We must do something to curb the number of personal bankruptcies that strain our banks,

credit unions and responsible financial institutions. But we must not do so at the expense of children receiving court-ordered child support and college students who are targeted by lures of easy credit and already facing thousands of dollars in student financial aid debt.

COLLEGIATE HOUSING AND
INFRASTRUCTURE ACT OF 2003

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing legislation, along with my colleague Congressman BEN CARDIN, that would allow charitable and educational organizations to make grants to fraternities, sororities, and other collegiate organizations to provide housing and student facilities to the same extent that tax-exempt colleges and universities may provide such facilities for students.

By way of background, taxpayers may generally deduct contributions to non-profit educational organizations (i.e., educational organizations described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code ("Code")) such as colleges or universities. These colleges and universities may expend their funds (including donated funds) on student facilities such as dormitories, dining halls, study areas, libraries, computers, laundry facilities, physical fitness facilities, and social or recreational areas without jeopardizing their tax-exempt status.

State and private colleges and universities do not, and cannot, provide all of the housing and related student facilities necessary for their student bodies. Collegiate organizations such as fraternities, sororities, and other student associations (e.g., Muslim Students Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Hillel) fill a large part of the collegiate housing gap. Fraternities and sororities alone provide housing for more than 250,000 students each year. These student associations take on significant financial burdens in order to provide student housing without cost to affiliated colleges and universities.

Fraternities, sororities, and student associations provide collegiate housing through tax-exempt organizations, but their exemption comes under Code section 501(c)(7), with the result that direct contributions to these organizations are not deductible. However, educational organizations established to benefit these fraternities, sororities, and other student associations may qualify under Code section 501(c)(3) to receive deductible contributions.

The current IRS position is that it will not give a tax-exemption ruling to these educational organizations unless they limit student facility grants to those that are solely for educational use (with exceptions for minor social or recreational use). According to this IRS position, a fraternity foundation, for example, may make grants to a fraternity for the construction (or for annual operating expenses) in a fraternity house of a library, study area, computer area, or instructional area. The fraternity foundation may also make grants, for computers, computer desks, and chairs, if similar to what is provided by the specific college with which the fraternity is associated, and for internet wiring, if the specific college also provides internet wiring. However, the

IRS says that fraternity foundations may not make student facility grants for the construction or operation of sleeping quarters, dining areas, laundry facilities, or dedicated social or recreational areas (such as physical fitness facilities or equipment), or hallways or rooms used for both educational and other purposes.

Under the current IRS position, a charitable organization could not make a grant to a section 501(c)(7) collegiate housing organization (or to an affiliated section 501(c)(2) or (c)(7) organization) to provide fire safety upgrades unless those upgrades were limited to areas that are solely for educational use. However, fire safety upgrades will not provide necessary protection unless they are made throughout an entire building. It has been estimated that just the cost of installing sprinklers in fraternity and sorority housing is over \$300 million nationwide.

There is no policy reason for distinguishing between the types of student facilities that may be provided by a tax-exempt college and those that may be provided by another tax-exempt charitable or educational organization to a collegiate organization for the benefit of individuals who are full-time college students. The current IRS position, which we believe is an incorrect interpretation of the law, puts collegiate organizations at a significant disadvantage in obtaining the funds necessary to provide or maintain housing and infrastructure, including the funds necessary to provide fire safety upgrades.

I believe that clarifying that tax-exempt charitable or educational organizations may make collegiate housing and infrastructure grants will encourage private sector contributions to address student housing needs, thus relieving a burden that would otherwise fall on financially strapped colleges and universities. Accordingly, this bill provides that charitable and educational organizations may make grants to collegiate housing organizations (including affiliate organizations holding title to property) for the construction or operation of collegiate housing and infrastructure facilities that are of the type tax-exempt colleges are permitted to provide for their students, including, but not limited to, sleeping quarters, fire safety equipment and upgrades, dining areas, social and recreational areas, study areas, libraries, and computers and related furniture and wiring.

I urge our colleagues to support this worthy legislation.

HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOLUNTEERS FOR OUTDOOR COLORADO

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, and to congratulate VOC for its two decades of working to enhance the beauty, accessibility and integrity of Colorado's parks, greenways and public lands.

The work of VOC and its countless volunteers has benefited the entire state. Through countless thousands of hours of strenuous yet rewarding work, trails have been repaired, wheelchair ramps installed, trees planted and

facilities constructed. The results have enhanced the outdoor experiences of visitors to Colorado's public lands splendor.

Poll after poll shows that Americans believe that environmental protection and quality of life are high priorities. And just as many people believe themselves to be "environmentalists." But too often, people lack a way to give practical expression to these views. VOC provides that opportunity.

Participating in VOC activities is fun, easy and user-friendly. You don't need to be an expert, you don't need to know how to drive a tractor or a backhoe. All you need is a passion for the beauty and health of our surroundings—urban, suburban, in the mountains or on the plains—to participate. That, and a healthy willingness to get your hands and feet dirty.

I am especially appreciative of VOC's legacy of active volunteerism because the values it engenders are needed now more than ever.

Since I was first elected to Congress, I have visited high schools throughout Colorado's Second Congressional District. What I've heard from the young people I've met on these visits has reinforced my conviction that we need to provide them with opportunities to develop self-respect and a sense of accomplishment—because those experiences can be antidotes to much of the anger and alienation that can erupt into violence.

Before entering public life, I headed the Colorado Outward Bound school. It provides challenging adventures, such as rappelling down a mountain, fording a rushing river and surviving alone in the wilderness. Outward Bound, not unlike Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, aims at teaching people to take care of themselves and then to work together. This allows each individual to develop self-reliance and in turn enables each team to accomplish their collective goals.

I think these time-tested principles are very relevant to our search for ways to help our young people and our society. They aren't new—ask any good coach, teacher or VOC project leader—but they do work.

Along those lines, I think we should try to afford more young people the chance to confront challenges, tap into personal reservoirs of resourcefulness, and pull together as a group. And in the West as nowhere else we have a way to provide those experiences—outdoors, on the public lands.

That's why VOC and its projects benefit not only our young people, but people of all ages to get closer to the land and develop stronger ties to their communities, their families and themselves. That's also a major reason why I am a strong supporter of VOC and also why I have introduced legislation in the Congress to promote more volunteerism like the work of VOC—especially on our public lands.

In just a couple of weeks, we will be celebrating Earth Day. VOC, and the work it does every day, demonstrates the very principles that Earth Day was designed to celebrate and encourage. Earth Day gives us a chance to take stock of where we are and where we are going in our relationship with this planet. In this spirit and in recognizing the continuing work of VOC and all its participants, I'd like to read something that was written by my uncle, Stewart Udall.

As many of you know, Stewart was Secretary of the Interior under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. His book, *The Quiet Crisis*, was considered by many to be a precursor to

the environmental beliefs that lead to the creation of the first Earth Day over 30 years ago. His book, like the work of VOC, opened the eyes of many as to what we are doing to the environment that sustains and enriches our lives. One passage that I think applies to the values of VOC reads:

Each generation has its own rendezvous with the land, for despite our fee titles and claims of ownership, we are all brief tenants on this planet. By choice, or by default, we will carve out a land legacy for our heirs. We can misuse the land and diminish the usefulness of resources, or we can create a world in which physical affluence and affluence of the spirit go hand in hand.

These words reflect the ethic that VOC invokes everyday—and I can think of no better way to mark its 20th anniversary. I wish VOC continued success for the next 20 years and beyond.

CONGRATULATIONS WOODBURY
ROYALS' GIRLS BASKETBALL
TEAM

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Woodbury Royals' Girls Basketball team on their Class 4A Minnesota State High School Girl's Basketball championship. The Royals finished a perfect 29–0 with their 61–42 victory over the Eastview Lightning, in a game that showcased the number 1 and number 2 ranked teams in the State. This is the first State girls basketball title for the Royals in their 10th trip to the tournament. Coached by Dave Preller, the Royals capitalized on their scoring opportunities, sinking 25 of 29 free throws. Woodbury placed four players on the all tournament team: Sophomore Amanda Nisleit, junior Katie Tacheney and seniors Lacy Gram and Katie Kirley. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the fine students and coaches from Woodbury High School on their championship season. I know the citizens of Woodbury and all of Minnesota are proud of their accomplishment.

PIKE WINS INDIANA STATE BOYS
BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Pike High School, Indianapolis, IN, on winning the Indiana State Boys Basketball Championship (Class 4A). Pike's Red Devils defeated the DeKalb Barons 65–52, to claim the championship and end the season with a perfect record of 29–0.

Congratulations to Coach Larry Bullington and the Pike Red Devils players: David Barlow, Dominic Collins, Michael Russell, Adrian Rosales, Torrian Bluiitt, Robert Vaden, Darren Yates, Courtney Lee, Devin Thomas, Michael McCoy, Sydney McDaniel, Keith Davney, Justin Cage, and Parnell Smith.

The Indiana State Boys Basketball Championship was played at Conseco Fieldhouse in

Indianapolis, IN. This is the third title the Red Devils have won in the past six years.

It has been an outstanding year for the Red Devils whose hardwork and dedication has led the team to a victorious season. Although the Red Devils were runner's up during last years State Finals, their perseverance and desire to win has allowed them ultimate success in 2003.

Again, an outstanding example of perfect teamwork.

Congratulations to the Red Devils! Job well done. You've made us proud!

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. HELEN
WISE SCOTT

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to a friend of the Sixth District of New Jersey. Mrs. Helen Wise Scott, is an outstanding individual, who is being honored by the National Association of Negro & Professional Women's Club of Central New Jersey for her unselfish service to others and community involvement.

Mrs. Scott is this year's Recipient of the Sojourner Truth Award, which is presented annually to an individual whose life is devoted to community enrichment, active involvement to improve social and economic conditions, and a strong courageous character. Mrs. Helen Scott's life truly parallels the life of Sojourner Truth, as evidenced by her commitment to helping those less fortunate.

Helen Scott is the youngest daughter of the late Louis and Annabelle Wise of Cape May, N.J. Helen Scott's commitment to education was evident early on. She graduated from Cape May High School and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from Combs College of Music in Philadelphia. Later she attended Monmouth University where she was awarded a Master's in Education. Afterwards, Mrs. Scott felt the need to share her joy of learning with those around her and accepted a position with the Asbury Park School District to teach music. She was the first African American music teacher to be hired in the district. It was there that she presented numerous musicals and choral programs, exposing many African American youths to music and the theatre.

As a child advocate Mrs. Scott has been actively involved with many organizations and boards that are concerned with the education and welfare of children. She has served on the Board of Monmouth Day Care Center for over three decades and is presently on its Advisory Board. Mrs. Scott was a member of the Community Coordinated Child Care Committee of Monmouth County for several years. Most recently, she was appointed to serve on the Presidential Roundtable by President George W. Bush.

Mrs. Scott's other community service activities have been wide and varied even though she is a child advocate at heart. You may see her, along with her daughter, delivering bagels to the homeless shelter in Fort Monmouth or to the Mercy Center in Asbury Park. Mrs. Scott is also a longtime member of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church in Asbury Park where she formally served as choir director.

Recently, she was elected to the vestry, which is the governing body of the church.

Through her tireless efforts Helen Scott has fostered a sense of community in her area and strived to help those less fortunate than herself. Mrs. Scott, like Sojourner Truth, is an extraordinary individual who is dedicated to enriching the lives of those around her. On this day I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the distinguished Helen Wise Scott.

COMMENDING MR. DON NOVEY

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to commend and thank Mr. Don Novey who recently retired as president of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) for his many years of dedication to improving public safety in the State of California.

A sixth-generation Californian born in Sacramento, Don Novey earned an Associate of Arts degree from American River College. After concluding counterintelligence service with the U.S. Army in 1971, Don followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a correctional officer at Folsom State Prison. This decision was one that not only shaped his own future, but eventually resulted in dramatic changes for the entire profession in California. Although he was promoted to sergeant in 1977 and became a lieutenant in 1984, Don's most significant professional advancement took place within the leadership ranks of CCPOA.

Because of his discouragement over the generally negative perception and portrayal of "prison guards" at the time, Don ran to become the union's statewide vice president in 1979. Although unsuccessful in that bid, he was elected to the state presidency in 1980, thus beginning a 22-year tenure at the organization's helm. During that time, he transformed the CCPOA from a union with little political clout to one that today is arguably the most powerful and influential organization involved in state government policymaking. Under his leadership, the level of public respect for correctional officers increased substantially. At the same time, he succeeded in winning broad support from state leaders to improve training, safety, compensation, and working conditions for his colleagues.

While helping his association's membership, Don was equally responsible for helping to shape a wide array of policies dealing with public safety that have greatly benefited the people of California. Due in part to his efforts, the state strengthened its penalties for criminal behavior, especially violent crime. Don and his colleagues encouraged the California State Legislature and the governor to enact non-sense laws to address criminal recidivism, namely the "Three Strikes, You're Out" law.

It is important to note that Don's firm sense of justice is matched by his deep compassion for those who suffer injustice. In 1992, he helped establish the Crime Victims United of California; an organization which has aided those victimized by criminal behavior and their families. The group has elevated their plight in

the consciousness of elected officials and the general public, which has led to greater respect and protection for crime victims.

Don has also served in a number of other important capacities. He has been a member of the International Narcotics Law Enforcement Association, the National Intelligence Board, Governor George Deukmejian's Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Safety, the California Industrial Welfare Commission, the California Athletics Commission, and the board of the Kevin Collins Foundation, which works to locate missing and abducted children.

Don's own children and grandchildren are a high priority in his life. He and his wife, Carol, are the proud parents of Donald, Brandy, and Shanon. They also enjoy spending time with their five grandchildren. In short, his life so far has been one of hard work and achievement, patriotism and service, family and friendship. The people of California and the United States are better off for his efforts.

Now as he enjoys retirement from his career in corrections, I thank him for his service, support, and friendship. As a friend and fellow resident of my hometown of Rocklin, I wish him well in his future endeavors. I have no doubt that we have not heard the last from Don Novey.

HONORING CÉSAR E. CHÁVEZ

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, the history of the United States is filled with heroes who, through personal sacrifice and a strong commitment to their cause, have left their mark on society. Today, I am proud to honor the life and accomplishments of California's own, the late, talented union organizer, César E. Chávez.

Born on March 31, 1927 to a farming family in Yuma, AZ, César learned early that life is filled with challenges. He was ten years old when his family lost their farm during the Depression. By 1938, the Chávez family joined thousands of others following the crops throughout the Southwest, eventually making it to California. It was during this period that César began to realize that he and the other migrant workers not only lived in deplorable conditions but also were treated as second-class citizens.

After his tour of duty in the U.S. Navy at the end of World War II, César returned to California with his wife Helena to continue farming. In 1952, he met Fred Ross, an organizer for the Community Service Organization (CSO). César flourished as an active member of this organization, conducting voter registration drives, battling racial and economic discrimination, and organizing new CSO chapters across California and Arizona. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, César became the national director of CSO. But no matter how hard he worked, he continued to have trouble persuading workers to fight for their rights because they were afraid of losing their jobs.

In order to fulfill his desire to create a union for farm workers, César left his position with the CSO in 1962. He traveled from camp to camp recruiting workers. With the assistance of his family, he managed to organize 300

members into the National Farm Workers Union, NFWA, later changed to the United Farm Workers, UFW. Through César's leadership, the UFW gained the national support of unions, church groups, students, minorities, and consumers.

César's commitment brought dignity and respect to the farm workers who organized themselves and became an inspiration and a resource to other Americans and people engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world. His fast in 1968 for 25 days prompted the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy to call him "one of the most heroic figures of our time".

From 1965 through the 1980s, César led numerous strikes, boycotts, and protests—not only to increase wage earnings at the time, but also to increase public awareness to the plight of the migrant workers. During the 1980s, the number of farm workers working under UFW contacts rose tremendously, allowing them to enjoy higher pay, family health coverage, pension benefits and other contract protections.

César E. Chávez worked until his death on April 23, 1993, defending the rights of farm workers to the end. Even now, his spirit and legacy continue to be studied and rewarded.

On August 8, 1994, Chávez became only the second Mexican-American to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States. Also, in that same year, his family and officers of the UFW created the César E. Chávez Foundation to inspire current and future generations by promoting the ideals of César's life, work, and vision.

The State of California honored his life and work in 2000 by proclaiming March 31 as César E. Chávez Day. California dedicates the remainder of the week to paying tribute to the great union leader by teaching elementary and secondary school children about his work. I am also honored to announce that I am an original cosponsor of House Resolution 112, which will establish a national legal public holiday in honor of the great social justice leader.

Today, César E. Chávez would have celebrated his 76th birthday. I am proud to celebrate his life and work. May his spirit and dedication continue to be an inspiration to those engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world.

CELEBRATING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORP

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the seventieth anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps, and to pay tribute to the commendable service its members offered our nation. Created by President Franklin Roosevelt on March 31, 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps had a profound impact on this nation, helping to sustain the United States through the depths of the Depression, and setting a precedent for other federal agencies to carry on the diverse missions of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Within days after his presidential inauguration, Franklin Roosevelt initiated plans for the

Civilian Conservation Corps, citing the need for an organization that would provide jobs for hundreds of thousands of unemployed young men aged 18 to 25. President Roosevelt declared that the Civilian Conservation Corps would "conserve our precious natural resources and pay dividends to the present and future generations. More important, we can take a vast army of the unemployed out into healthful surroundings." The Civilian Conservation Corps' intention was not only to provide services to the United States but also to give the unemployed an opportunity to live in healthful surroundings with steady pay, room, board, and clothing.

During the nine years the Civilian Conservation Corps was in operation, more than 3 million men were involved in the program nationally, working on projects like dam improvement, tree planting, laying telephone lines, and creating trails. Almost 55,000 men served on projects throughout New Mexico. More than 32,000 of them were residents of New Mexico.

By July 1, 1933, a quarter of a million enrollees had enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps, making it the fastest large-scale mobilization of men in U.S. history. The enrollees enlisted for six months with the option to reenroll for another six months or a maximum of two years. They worked forty-hour weeks and received thirty dollars a month. Each month, they required the men to send twenty-five dollars to their families to help them through the difficulties of the Depression. The Civilian Conservation Corps provided members with the opportunity to learn a new skill and allowed them to attend classes to further their education. More than 100,000 men were taught to read and write with the aid of the Civilian Conservation Corps's education classes.

The accomplishments the Civilian Conservation Corps achieved in its nine-year existence are impressive. Historical areas in Jamestown, Williamsburg, Yorktown, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania were restored and developed by the Corps members. At the program's peak, there were over 500 Civilian Conservation Corps camps in national, state, and local parks. Civilian Conservation Corps workers cleared trails, built buildings and shelters, fought forest fires, planted trees, and made other improvements to parks in all the states, territories, and possessions. The three million men planted a total of 2.3 billion trees, spent 6.4 million days fighting forest fires and eradicated diseases and pests. These accomplishments contributed to the Civilian Conservation Corps' lasting environmental legacy. Today, agencies such as Americorps, the Park Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are continuing the tradition of the Civilian Conservation Corps by instilling a sense of value for our natural environment as well as for national service.

Because of its major presence in New Mexico, the Civilian Conservation Corps worked on several projects throughout the state, including Rattlesnake Springs and Bandelier National Monument, aimed at benefiting both its members and residents of New Mexico. The men of the Civilian Conservation Corps also developed Hyde, Elephant Butte, Conchas, Bottomless Lake, and Santa Fe River Parks, among others.

Communities across the country benefited from the hard toil of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The camps helped local economies,

bringing large numbers of consumers to the towns' stores and industries. More importantly, they aided the communities in times of crisis, searching for missing persons, fighting fires, and offering assistance to residents during snow and ice storms.

Today, the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps lives on in the New Mexico Youth Conservation Corps Act, which was adopted by the state Legislature in 1992. YCC provides employment for young people in projects that conserve the state's natural resources. The YCC provides a \$1,000 tuition voucher as additional compensation for those who serve. The voucher may be used at any institution of higher education in the state of New Mexico.

Besides offering the members an opportunity to work, the Civilian Conservation Corps provided long-lasting friendships and ties that have endured over the seventy years since the Corps' inception. This sense of loyalty and pride extended to an unquestionable sense of pride for our country that is almost unparalleled. The work of the Civilian Conservation Corps remains as a monument to the young men who dedicated their lives to mending and preserving our natural resources. These men have earned the respect and honor of our nation. I offer my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Civilian Conservation Corps and congratulations on their seventieth anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TIMOTHY T. WILLIAMS

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Timothy T. Williams, a resident of my district who has worked tirelessly for Baltimore's homeless citizens.

For the past 12 years, Mr. Williams has demonstrated outstanding service as Executive Director of the South Baltimore Homeless Shelter, where he led the development of a therapeutic community for homeless men with substance abuse problems, and skillfully managed comprehensive emergency services for homeless women and children. He has designed a community recovery model, through which graduates of the South Baltimore transitional shelter services provide counseling to homeless residents at South Baltimore Station and affiliated agencies, such as Carrington House.

Mr. Williams will now expand his work in the continuum of care for Baltimore's homeless and addicted by joining Jobs, Housing and Recovery, Inc., where he will develop supportive housing facilities and vocational services as the next step to recovery for Baltimore residents transitioning out of homelessness.

Mr. Williams received a bachelor's degree from Wheeling Jesuit University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Baltimore School of Law. Mr. Williams also served as a VISTA volunteer in Texas, where he provided legal aid services to the rural poor.

I commend and thank Timothy Williams for his outstanding contributions to Baltimore and its citizens, and I wish him continued success in all future endeavors.

CLARIFYING THE ENFORCEMENT PROVISIONS OF THE HATCH ACT

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 31, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill on behalf of myself as chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Representative FRANK WOLF. This legislation will clarify the intent of Congress regarding the enforcement of the Hatch Act.

The Hatch Act is a critical component of the system of laws designed to maintain the public's confidence in the professionalism of our nation's civil servants. The Act proscribes the types of political activity covered civil servants may engage in. The Act is intended to protect civil servants from political coercion by politically appointed supervisors. It is also intended to assure the impartial administration of Federal laws.

Since 1993 the general posture of the Hatch Act has been permissive, allowing civil servants wide latitude to be involved in non-partisan political activities in their communities. Federal employees are restricted from using their official authority to interfere in an election, and from soliciting or receiving political campaign contributions as well as several other activities relating to the use of their public authority for partisan effect. Covered employees also may not run for elective office in most partisan elections. The Act states that the penalty for violating the Act is a 30-day suspension without pay or, for egregious violations, termination from the civil service.

The Hatch Act is investigated and prosecuted by the United States Office of Special

Counsel (OSC). This office is primarily charged with protecting civil servants from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing activities. The OSC also investigates and prosecutes, when appropriate, violations of the Hatch Act.

Unfortunately, recent activities of the OSC have raised questions about the Office's interpretation of their prerogatives under the Hatch Act. Specifically, the OSC is attempting to prosecute an individual who is no longer an employee of the Federal government for an alleged Hatch Act violation. This action is clearly outside of the authority Congress granted under the 1993 Amendments to the Hatch Act since the only penalties are suspension or termination.

The bill accomplishes two goals.

First, it clarifies that a Federal employee who voluntarily separates from the civil service may not be penalized under the provisions of the Hatch Act. The bill also states that if that person rejoins the federal service the OSC may reopen that investigation should they so choose.

Second, this bill strikes two regulations promulgated by the OSC as routine use exceptions to the Privacy Act. These two exceptions allow the OSC to release private information for almost any reason as long as the records are used to defend the Office of the Special Counsel. The Privacy Act describes a routine use under 5 U.S.C. § 552a (7) as "the use of such record for a purpose which is compatible with the purpose with which it is collected." Since the OSC does not collect and develop its investigation files for the purpose of defending its reputation, these regulations are clearly inappropriate.

54,000 federal employees live in my district. These women and men provide much of the talent and energy that makes the local community work. In 1993, Congress amended the Hatch Act to create a very simple standard for behavior with very limited proscriptions for political behavior. The hope was to create an environment where these citizens would feel free to fully express themselves in the non-partisan political arena.

The zealous prosecution by the OSC is beginning to erode this framework of limited proscriptions. At a time when fewer and fewer people bother to participate in local government the Congress should re-affirm its commitment to local communities and to its own employees by reinforcing the limited, permissive character of the Hatch Act.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, April 1, 2003 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 2

9:30 a.m.

Environment and Public Works

To hold oversight hearings to examine issues relating to military encroachment.

SD-406

Foreign Relations

To resume hearings to examine foreign assistance oversight.

SD-419

10 a.m.

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine an overview of the fiscal year 2004 Navy Budget.

SD-192

Appropriations

District of Columbia Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the status of foster care in the District of Columbia.

SD-138

Finance

Business meeting to consider original legislation entitled "Energy Tax Incentives Act of 2003", "Clean Diamond Trade Act", and "Tax Court Modernization Act", the nominations of Mark W. Everson, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue, Diane L. Kroupa, of Minnesota, Harry A. Haines, of Montana, Robert Allen Wherry, Jr., of Colorado, and Joseph Robert Goeke, of Illinois, each to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court, and Raymond T. Wagner, Jr., of Missouri, to be a Member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board for the remainder of the term expiring September 14, 2004.

SD-215

Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Clay Johnson III, of Texas, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, Albert Casey, of Texas, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service, and James C. Miller III, of Virginia, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

SD-342

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 231, to authorize the use of certain grant funds

to establish an information clearinghouse that provides information to increase public access to defibrillation in schools, proposed legislation entitled "Genetics Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2003", "Smallpox Emergency Personnel Protection Act of 2003", "The Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act", "Caring for Children Act of 2003", and pending nominations.

SD-430

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 556, to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to revise and extend that Act.

SR-485

Armed Services

Strategic Forces Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Defense, focusing on the Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management and Office of Legacy Management.

SR-222

10:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Transportation Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine aviation's safety and security issues, and financial challenges facing the aviation industry.

SD-124

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science, Technology, and Space Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine NASA manned space flight.

SR-254

Commission on Security and Cooperation
in Europe

To hold hearings to examine arming rogue regimes, focusing on the role of OSCE participating states.

334 Cannon Building

APRIL 3

9:15 a.m.

Finance

To hold hearings to examine health care services.

SD-215

9:30 a.m.

Judiciary

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-226

10 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine proposed legislation authorizing funds for child nutrition programs.

SR-328A

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold oversight hearings to examine the Federal Reserve Board proposal on check truncation; to be followed by a business meeting to consider the nominations of Thomas Waters Grant, of New York, Noe Hinojosa, Jr., of Texas, Thomas Waters Grant, of New York, and William Robert Timken, Jr., of Ohio, each to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation, and Alfred Plamann, of California, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the National Consumer Cooperative Bank.

SD-538

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Lino Gutierrez, of Florida, to be Ambassador to Argentina, James B.

Foley, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti, and Roland W. Bullen, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

SD-419

Appropriations

VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2004 for the National Science Foundation and the Office of Science Technology Policy.

SD-138

2 p.m.

Appropriations

Foreign Operations Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2004 for the Department of State.

SD-192

2:30 p.m.

Armed Services

Airland Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force aviation and air-launched weapons programs in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2004 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

Foreign Relations

To resume hearings to examine NATO enlargement, focusing on qualifications and contributions.

SD-419

APRIL 7

1:30 p.m.

Appropriations

Energy and Water Development Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2004 for the Department Energy's Office of Environmental Management and Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management.

SD-124

APRIL 8

9:30 a.m.

Governmental Affairs

Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee

To hold joint hearings with the House Subcommittee on Civil Service and Agency Organization to examine the federal government's strategic human capital management and consider pending legislation on the federal workforce.

SD-342

Rules and Administration

To hold oversight hearings to examine the operations of the Sergeant at Arms, the Library of Congress and the Congressional Research Service.

SR-301

10 a.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation.

SD-366

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the Mam-mography Quality Standards Act.

SD-430

2:30 p.m.

Foreign Relations

International Economic Policy, Export and Trade Promotion Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine global energy security issues.

SD-419

APRIL 9

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 Business meeting to consider pending calendar business. SD-430

2:30 p.m.
 Armed Services
 Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed legislation authorizing funds fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Defense, focusing on the readiness of the military services to conduct current operations and execute contingency plans. SR-222

3:30 p.m.
 Foreign Relations
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Joseph LeBaron, of Oregon, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Gregory W. Engle, of Colorado, to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic, Wayne E. Neill, of Nevada, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, and Helen R. Meagher La Lime, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. SD-419

4:30 p.m.
 Foreign Relations
 To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Reno L. Harnish, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heather M. Hodges, of Ohio, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Eric S. Edelman, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, and Ralph Frank, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia. SD-419

APRIL 10

9 a.m.
 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 To hold hearings to examine the teaching of American history and civics in the classroom. SD-430

9:30 a.m.
 Governmental Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Peter Eide, of Maryland, to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority. SD-342

10 a.m.
 Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine recent developments in Hedge Funds. SD-538

Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

1:30 p.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2004 for the Library of Congress and the Open World Leadership Center. SD-116

APRIL 29

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

APRIL 30

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

MAY 1

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2004 for the U.S. Capitol Police Board and the Sergeant-at-Arms. SD-124

MAY 8

1:30 p.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimate for the Secretary of the Senate and the Architect of the Capitol. SD-124

CANCELLATIONS

APRIL 2

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366

APRIL 3

10 a.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Business meeting to consider comprehensive energy legislation. SD-366